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FM AMEMBASSY ASMARA
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INFO CDR USAFRICOM STUTTGART GE
CIA WASHDC
CJTF-HOA J2X CAMP LEMONIER DJ
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DIA WASHDC
HQ USAFRICOM STUTTGART GE
JAC MOLESWORTH RAF MOLESWORTH UK
JICCENT MACDILL AFB FL
SECDEF WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L ASMARA 000314

DEPARTMENT FOR DS/IP/AF, DS/TIA/ITA, DS/IP/SPC/SO,
DS/OPO/FLD, AND AF/E

E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/08/2029

TAGS: [ASEC](#) [PGOV](#) [ER](#)

SUBJECT: POLICE MEETING ON RISE IN CRIME IN ASMARA

Classified By: Ambassador Ronald K. McMullen for Reason 1.4 (d)

¶1. (C) Regional administrators and Eritrean police held a discussion on 09/01/09 with over 2500 Eritreans near the Asmara suburb of Adi Segedo about the rising crime rates. During this meeting, residents complained of severe increases in burglaries, assaults, and robberies and asked for additional police presence in western Asmara. The Eritrean police acknowledged the rapid increase in crime but stated due to their limited resources they have been unable to stop this increase in crime and would not be able to increase their presence in this area. The police warned the group of a rising number of youths who are inhaling benzene and propane gases to get "high" and an increase in gang activity in Asmara. Criminal acts involving stoned youths and alcohol related crimes are increasing. The police stated over a two month period in the summer they had recorded over 350 major felonies, the majority violent crimes.

¶2. (C) The regional administrator also warned the audience of the threat posed by non-governmental sanctioned "Pentecostal" religions, which he stated, are sponsored by the USG and whose followers are "spies of America." He also stated the USG is trying to divide the Eritrean populace by encouraging the growth of these religions and by sending money via Western Union to Eritrea to help groups opposed to the Eritrean government (GSE).

¶3. (C) Post Comments: Post continues to receive reports of a steady increase in crime where Americans and Westerners eat, live, frequent, shop, and work. Several local sources have confided to RSO that many Eritreans are scared of the rising crime that has resulted from shortages of fuel, food, and water and an increase in unemployment and inflation.

MCMULLEN